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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF RELATING STYLES IN YOUNG ADOLESCENTS

BY

RONALD P. FUNK

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1990

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "A Phenomenological Investigation of Relating Styles in Young Adolescents" submitted by Ronald P. Funk in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Counselling Psychology.

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Date: May, 1990

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to arrive at a deeper understanding of the manner in which young adolescents relate with others, and in particular, how they include or exclude themselves in interpersonal situations. One hundred and three grade 7 and 9 students consented to participate in a study where constructed images were related to self-report data as a way of formulating initial descriptions of personal involvement preferences. Students completed a self-reflective questionnaire designed to gather data based on their everyday interpersonal experiences. Then, students were administered a theme oriented guided fantasy following which they provided personal descriptions of their fantasy experience. Data condensation was modelled after the methods described by Colaizzi (1978) and Giorgi (1975).

Descriptive protocols indicated preferential patterns of involvement for the young adolescent participants. Expressed in continuum style, four major themes of personal involvement emerged from the data: (1) active exclusion behaviors; (2) passive exclusion behaviors; (3) passive inclusion behaviors; (4) active inclusion behaviors.

Discussion focuses on the author's belief of how participants accomplish being either included or excluded. Implications arising out of this discussion are aimed at parents, teachers, counsellors, and others entrusted with the well-being of young adolescents.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The peer group is an extremely important part of an adolescent's world as behavior is reinforced in a positive or negative manner within the peer context. Although the adolescent learns through a process of experimentation and collaboration, behavior towards others is grounded in a set of beliefs that are more or less consistent. Ridgeway (1988) identified beliefs as manifesting either implicitly or explicitly through patterned ways of relating to others. The set of beliefs held about one's self, as well as the set of beliefs held about others, determines to a great extent the quality of relationships established.

Adolescents feel most depressed when they spend an inordinate amount of time alone. Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984) reported that compared to being with others, being alone is painful for adolescents as thoughts take the form of worry. Adolescents who are alone imagine themselves being unable to attract the attention of others, and they fantasize living an isolated existence resulting in feelings of worthlessness.

When properly utilized solitude can bring attention to a painful deficit and can motivate adolescents into action which

will reduce the deficit. By utilizing time spent alone to pursue reading, thinking, crafting, or even daydreaming, adolescents can internalize feedback to the self. When feedback derived from the self is used, feelings of loneliness are reduced and the self is strengthened.

Significance of the Study

The aim of the present work is to come to a deeper understanding of the manner in which young adolescents relate with others, and in particular, how they include or exclude themselves in interpersonal situations. The first challenge is to identify personal structures of the relating experience. The second challenge is to reflect this pattern in a meaningful way. The intention is not to explain or seek causation, but rather to describe behavior in order to increase awareness and promote understanding of adolescent behavior.

Following from Jourard's (1971) work, it is through self-disclosure that we come to understand ourselves. Awareness of personal relating patterns is a first step for individuals to clarify their feelings and behaviors. When we know the 'how' of what we do, we are better able to choose consciously to repeat it, or to change our behavior. From a counselling perspective, an understanding of human relating is essential in order to deal with problems that arise out of personal

relationships. For the counsellor, an understanding of the nature of personal relating provides information useful in developing ways of guiding others towards healthy and fulfilling relationships (Ridgeway, 1988). For the individual, an understanding of the nature of personal relating can be useful in strengthening self-confidence.

Overview of the Study

Chapter Two will feature a review of the relevant literature on adolescent friendship and loneliness. The significance of involvement in an adolescent peer group will be discussed.

Chapter Three explains the methodology used for the study. Both the approach to the study as well as the procedures followed are detailed.

Chapter Four presents the results of the phenomenological analysis in the form of descriptive protocols. The analysis is presented within categories along a continuum of inclusion-exclusion styles of relating.

Chapter Five is a discussion of the results presented in Chapter Four. Included is a summary of the major themes of adolescent relating as well as suggestions for practical application of the findings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Experience of Adolescence

Adolescence is a time of tension, a time of gladness and of concern, of discovery and of confusion, of changing from the past and of continuation with the past. Within the self-imposed confines of the peer group, adolescents "seek acceptance and approval, find security, attempt to exert power and, perhaps most important, test out in an atmosphere unencumbered by adults the things they have learned or have imagined about social relationships." (Horrocks & Benimoff, 1966, p.224). The peer group provides the stage on which the self-concept is formulated and revised, the basis of the revision coming from the evaluation of equals rather than the imposition of adults.

Adolescents spend their time in a variety of activities such as talking with peers, watching television, and studying. Working and talking with adults consumes the least amount of their time (Csikszentmihalyi, Larson & Prescott, 1977). When individual activities were categorized into either productive, maintenance or leisure types and related to adolescent motivational levels, it was found that adolescents, when engaged in activities related to school work (productive activity), wished they were doing something else. Maintenance

activities (activities related to maintaining appropriate body health) yielded a range of positive, neutral and negative emotions. It was during leisure activities that adolescents reported the most positive motivation.

A recent study of Canadian youth (Posterski & Bibby, 1988), suggested that Canadian young people place a high value on friendship. In fact, the Canadian Youth Foundation study showed that 83% of Canadian youth view friendship as being very important. Furthermore, 93% stated that friendship was their number one source of enjoyment. Norman and Harris (1981) determined that friendships were so important to teens that 88% will continue to see their friends even though their parents disapprove. Of vital concern to young adolescents is finding, making, and maintaining friends.

When young people leave home for college or university they become prime candidates to risk isolation if they cannot fit into their new routine. The University of Guelph, acknowledging the need for friendship, initiated a study to determine the quality of life of students entering university. Benjamin (1989) reported, after analyzing interview and diary data, that the need to make new friends is much more important to entry-level students than first thought. Benjamin cited factors such as family of origin and quality of student-parent relationship influencing a person's experience of

entering university life. Achieving a balance between academic and social life is desirable as it grounds an individual in present reality and facilitates a smooth transition to new environments.

Importance of Friendships

Individuals learn to function as social beings during adolescence when they are seeking connections with peers who are experiencing the same phases and developmental challenges. The peer group offers a world for the adolescents to socialize in, free from the encumbrances of adults. In this group of friends, adolescents can find support for their efforts and test out the things they believe to be true or wish to be true about social relations.

That the peer group is of special significance during adolescence stems from the nature of the adolescent process. Coleman (1980) related the acceptability of describing adolescence as a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. During this stage, the adolescent must "cope with all the change and adaptation implicit in any such transition from one stage to another" (p.409). With the teenage years being a period of tremendous fluctuation in terms of physical, emotional and social development, the adolescent is faced with the responsibility of coping and adapting. In the face of these

challenges, individuals look to increased support from others, particularly those who have recently faced similar events in their own lives.

The achievement of independence, characterized by the gradual severance of early emotional ties with parents, is an integral feature of adolescence. At some time in their transition stage adolescents question adult standards and eventually challenge the adult authority. The resultant weakened emotional link between parent and adolescent heightens the attractiveness of peer support. In a position of uncertainty and doubt, where direction and guidance is sought, adolescents find if difficult to turn to parents and will in their stead turn to friends (Kon & Losenkov, 1978; Parham & Tinsley, 1980; Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984).

Change is usually equated with experimentation. This is especially true for adolescents as they continue to try new behaviors during their movement into adulthood. Erikson (1968) utilized the term "psychosocial moratorium" in describing the freedom which allowed youth to experiment with adult commitments. The "moratorium" is a period of delay granted to somebody who is not ready to meet an obligation. For the adolescent, this means time to discover which sorts of behaviors are acceptable and which are not, which facets of their personality are liked and which are rejected. Above all,

they have to find out how their needs and motives interact best with the social environment and which roles are compatible with their own developing identities (Coleman, 1980). The adolescent process of discovery, at times reinforcing, at times humbling, is dependent on the involvement of the peer group. Because of the nature of the adolescent transitional period, friends and the peer group can be a significant determinant of adolescent development.

Achieving Friendships

The human 'herd instinct' is explained by Argyle (1972) as the seeking of goals in social situations. These goals are the motivational sources of interpersonal behavior and take the form of "responses which are sought from others, or types of relationships with other people" (p.16). One of the motivations for social interaction is to fulfill the need for affiliation. Here, "subjects strong in affiliation spend time establishing personal relationships with other people" (p.28). Affiliation needs motivate friendly social interaction as well as other expressions of intimacy. Argyle explained that affiliation motivation probably developed from early familial experiences of dependency.

Elkind (1984) suggested that 'shock' is experienced by adolescents, in three distinct forms, when initial attempts at

inclusion into the peer group are undertaken. He depicted it as moving into a new society which necessitates the learning of new patterns of behavior. For the adolescent, the shock of exclusion is very real. Where once the format of play was determined by who lives nearby, who gets there first or who has the toys or equipment, adolescent play grouping is largely determined by qualities such as social status and ethnic background (p.70). Consequently, many children feel the shock of peer exclusion where they once felt accepted.

The strategic nature of involvement in the adolescent peer culture too often is learned at personal expense. Here, the well-intended adolescent experiences the 'shock of betrayal'. While he or she was operating according to one set of rules, the free and honest sharing of information, the other person was operating strategically, obtaining, concealing, or conveying information for personal advantage (Elkind, 1984). An adolescent's social situation comes to realization once the impact of social betrayal is experienced. Movement from friendships focused on common activity, to friendships based on trust and loyalty often leave adolescents feeling used and exploited.

Elkind discussed a third shock which adolescents experience, the shock of disillusionment. Adolescents appreciation of their new capacity for idealization is subject to

personal evaluation as they come to realize the harshness of their world. It often comes as a shock to adolescents that in the things they choose to value, significant others do not necessarily see the same qualities.

Kon and Losenkov (1978) explained that the age difference and the respect of the children for their parents inevitably creates a psychological distance which both sides intuitively observe. In reports of parent-adolescent relating, the real issue is dealing with power and control in family life. Both parties seem to overestimate their degree of power (Callan & Noller, 1986).

A very delicate balance of openness and trust exists as parents adjust to the changing needs of the child. Parental ability to adjust and provide allows for the development of a healthy attitude in the adolescent toward the life experiences of elders (Kon & Losenkov, 1978). As attitudes are learned quickly, it is important for parents to realize that they present and re-present standards that structure the adolescent's motives and actions. The feelings and perceptions adolescents have about their families are critical to their total psychological well-being (Callan & Noller, 1986).

In studying the management of adolescent friendship from a communicative perspective, Rawlins and Holl (1987)

derived a Continuum of Friendship Types. This typology is organized into five units as follows:

1. Best Friends. A best friendship is a relationship of absolute confidence. Best friends spend much time together doing numerous activities.

2. Close Friends. Close friendships involved considerable, but not always absolute, confidence. Close friendship, being a dyadic relationship, allowed for one person's close friend to also be someone else's close friend as in cliques or triads. Since close friends can be people with whom one talks about other friends, in contrast with the exclusive friend, one risks that the person under discussion might also be a close friend with the other.

3. Average Friends. These relationships are nonexclusive to the point of involving interchangeable members. Participants subdivided this level into two specific types: (a) activity friends, who are nonexclusive people to "go out and have fun with"; (b) school friends, who comprise the nonexclusive friendships the students reported seeing and hanging around at school only and not on weekends.

4. Specialized Friends. Two basic types exist: (a) study friends, who are people with whom one periodically studies but does not hang out with; (b) sports friends, are those with whom

one hangs out only during the season when both persons are on the same athletic team.

5. On the periphery of the friendship continuum is the pool of possibilities. These are "Friends you say 'Hi' to in the halls". A change in either person's circumstances or approachability might usher in a closer relationship (p.352-353).

Despite identification of popularity as being a public pursuit and friendship being a private one, the development and management of friendships always involves the possibility of general relationships becoming increasingly private and of guarded interactions becoming more public (Rawlins & Holl, 1987). Of concern to adolescents is not only the preservation of trust, but also the violation of trust in their friendships. The discriminating feature of each level of friendship is degree of trust.

The significance of trust in a relationship along with the overlapping boundaries between friendships increases the tension within the adolescent social system. The responsibility of trust in relationships often places individuals at crossroads as responsibilities to different friends may violate both friends' expectations.

Loneliness

Harry Stack Sullivan's (1953) theory on personality development described interpersonal relationships as being central to mature personality development. "Sullivan portrayed the individual in the group, learning from the group" (Kovach, 1983, p.179). Consistent with his description of the development of the individual as a result of need attainment, Sullivan defined loneliness as "the exceedingly unpleasant and driving experience connected with inadequate discharge of the need for human intimacy" (Bulka, 1984, p.5). Sullivan saw loneliness as an integral component of one's personality resulting from unfulfilled needs that arise at progressive intervals of development. The following table (Sullivan,1953) identifies the developmental period, the motivational force and an elaboration of the resultant experience of loneliness:

Table 1

Human Experience of Loneliness Based on Need Frustration

Period	Motivational System	Experience of Loneliness
Infancy	Need for contact.	Infants are totally dependent upon an elaborate group for tenderness.

Childhood	Need for adult participants in activities.	Regardless of the form of participation, it is who participates that fulfills the need.
Juvenile	Need for compeers.	Here, it is necessary to feel accepted by those 'that count'.
Pre-Adolescence	Need for intimate exchange with a chum, friend or loved one.	The nature of the exchange enhances personal satisfaction and security (p.261).

Information modified from Sullivan 1953.

Peplau and Perlman (1982) reported that about 80% of individuals under the age of eighteen years were sometimes or often lonely. In comparison, 53% of those between the ages of forty-five and fifty-four, and 37% of those fifty-five and older reported feelings of loneliness. Of those adolescents admitting feelings of loneliness, 15 to 20% reported experiencing painful levels of loneliness, and as many as 50% admit experiencing recurrent feelings of loneliness (Bulka, 1984, p.18). Sullivan (1953) emphasized that the desire to seek relief from loneliness does not manifest in anything like a driving force

until the preadolescent era. Feelings of loneliness are so intense that regardless of personal consequences, loneliness leads to integration. At this time our need for dealing with others is such that fear and anxiety do not have the power to stop a reaching out towards opportunities which provide relief from loneliness.

Whether it be for "identity" (Erikson, 1968), or the "need for intimacy" (Sullivan, 1953), adolescent friendship is the first independently selected attachment. Posterski (1989) cited one of the virtues of today's youth being the high value they place on people. He reported that friendship and being loved rank as the most sought-after goals of Canadian youth. Adolescent friendships are vital to growth because they afford opportunities to cope with an outside world.

Integration

Sullivan (1953), Csikszentmihalyi and Larson (1984), and Morrison (1986), explained that although loneliness is encountered by adolescents, it need not be debilitating. When viewed as a source of motivation, being alone leads to integration. The adolescent, although overwhelmed with being alone, can come to pursue opportunities that provide the feedback so necessary to the developing self (Peplau & Perlman, 1982 and Bulka, 1984).

Jourard (1971) regarded disclosure of the self as a necessary process to really knowing the self. Defining self disclosure as "the ability to talk truthfully about one's self" (Ridgeway, 1988, p.18), the concern for the adolescent is that in disclosing, individuals allow themselves to be exposed. At a time when fear of rejection or exclusion is prevalent, approaching others, let alone disclosing the self to others, is a developmental accomplishment in itself. Yet, movement towards trusting ourselves in relating is the real accomplishment through this period of adolescence.

Young peoples' valuing of people (Posterski, 1989), and their continual struggle for independence from those that care for them most, indicates that friends become the largest contributor to shaping adolescents. While immersed in the peer group, the achievement of friendships are often taken for granted. Elkind (1984) reminded readers that the pursuit of friendship is often a time of 'shock' for the neophyte. A more complex and complicated social system envelopes adolescents forcing them to learn and relearn socially acceptable mannerisms.

Being adolescent means recognizing and coping with personal crises enroute to a secured and defined sense of self. In order to maintain true friendships, adolescents must first come to a realization and eventual acceptance of themselves.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

Where traditional research has tended to force psychological study to conform to one method, the experimental method, Colaizzi (1978) asserted that phenomenological research utilizes many descriptive methods. Each particular psychological phenomenon, in conjunction with the particular aims and objectives of a particular researcher, evokes a particular study, a descriptive method (p.53).

Phenomenology presupposes that the phenomenon is not understood by the researcher in any definitive way. By "returning to the things themselves" (Husserl, 1970), rather than to the definitions of things, the phenomenon can be descriptively identified. The investigation of the phenomenon as it is experienced allows it to be seen in a new light.

In order to gather the data, appropriate questions must be generated. Colaizzi (1978) derived questions which elicited descriptive data by examining his and other's presuppositions about the phenomenon. This method places emphasis on the questions' ability to tap the subjects' experiences of the

phenomenon as distinct from their theoretical knowledge of it. With this in mind, anyone can serve as a subject provided they have experienced the phenomenon and are able to communicate intelligently (p.58).

Phenomenal patterning is based on the view that individuals develop and maintain a personal world view or cognitive map which dictates the nature of their participation in the world (Korzybski, 1958). In studying involvement, personal patterns of behavior may be explicated from analyzing the style of entry behavior in everyday interactions. For example, observing how a person enters a friendly conversation, a personal relationship, a classroom discussion or a room full of people allows for an inclusion pattern to be described. The patterning process provides a description of how a person is responding in a particular context at a particular moment. When considering a number of instances, such data may reveal habitual or preferred patterns of coping, being and doing.

Awareness of the basic behaviors that shape experiences in interpersonal relations allows individuals the choice to either repeat the behaviors or respond in a different way. Taking the position that the limitations people experience are to be found in their way of representing the world, rather than in the world itself (Bandler & Grinder, 1975), the patterning approach

allows for the gathering of descriptive data. The patterning approach facilitates self-knowing through self-reflective witnessing.

Research Participants

As detailed in Table 2, 103 grade 7 and grade 9 students consented to participate in this study.

Table 2

Age and Frequency of Research Participants

Age	Frequency	Percent
12	27	26.2
13	14	13.6
14	41	39.8
15	18	17.5
16	3	2.9
Total	103	100.0

The most prevalent age groups represented are the 12 and 14 year olds. This indicates a relatively normal sampling of seventh and ninth graders, when six years is accepted as a beginning school age. In terms of gender, 55 of the participants were male, 48 were female.

In considering the data, the school's community must be taken into consideration (Coleman, 1961). F. R. Haythorne is situated on the outskirts of Sherwood Park on land owned by the City of Edmonton. This location necessitates that all students be bussed in and remain on the school grounds for the day. Students do not have the distractions of neighboring facilities. The pace at school is fast, with morning bells signalling both the end of one period and the beginning of the next. The atmosphere created is one of efficiency.

The approximately 500 students are made up of a balanced blend of 'urban' Sherwood Park students, 'suburban' acreage students and 'rural' country students. Students are encouraged by the staff to make decisions that will be of benefit to them in their future years of school. The preference is to treat the students as much like young adults as possible, rather than keeping them as children. The majority of the students' parents are middle to upper middle class.

Instruments

Two questionnaires were utilized to prompt descriptions of engaging behaviors. Both questionnaires were designed to be completed by participants at their own speed. Directions for completion as well as clarification of terms were given verbally.

The self-reflective interpersonal questionnaire. Adapted from Koziey & Andersen's (1989) study of fourth-year university undergraduates, the questionnaire consists of four statements which require participant response. Each statement is designed to elicit remembered descriptions relating to the experience of involvement. Following are the four questions asked of participants:

1. Describe how you generally include yourself in activities with people and things.

2. Explain how you join in activities with: (a) old friends, (b) individuals, (c) groups of people.

3. Describe how you usually approach others to talk casually.

4. Describe what you notice about how you involve yourself with friends.

Statement one asks participants to describe in general terms how they included themselves with people or things. It was asked so that participants could orient themselves to the theme of inclusion. Statement two asks them to become more specific in describing their behavior. Participants were asked to describe their actions in the different contexts of their friends, individuals, and groups. Statement three asks them to describe entry behavior in a context that according to Csikszentmihalyi, Larson & Prescott (1977), is the most rewarding for them--

casual conversation. Statement four allows the participants to summarize what they have noticed or know about their involvement behavior.

The guided imagery experience. A theme-oriented guided fantasy was administered to provide structure and yet yield experiences which were general enough for participants to project their own world views. Dimmed lights, adequate ventilation and comfortable posture was encouraged to enhance the relaxed experience.

Koziey & Andersen (1989) provided the script to the guided fantasy which was adapted for use with Junior high school students:

Sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, in a position where breathing is easy; take a few deep, relaxing breaths, and allow your eyes to close as you clear your mind. . . (10 seconds)

Imagine yourself in the middle of nowhere. . . (10 seconds)

You may find yourself walking in a meadow and notice you are approaching a friendly body of water, a lake or a river. . . (5 seconds)

You somehow get involved with the water. . . (30 seconds)

You leave the water and continue walking through the meadow. . . (10 seconds)

In the near distance you notice an old friend approaching on the path. . . (5 seconds)

You somehow interact with this person. . . (30 seconds)
Continuing on your way, you soon begin a pleasurable climb up a mountain. . . (10 seconds)
As you approach the top, you see a group of people who have climbed up the other side. . . (10 seconds)
Notice how you respond in this situation. . . (30 seconds)
Slowly, and in your own time, come back to this room. . . (5 seconds)
You can open your eyes and feel alert, refreshed and relaxed. . . (30 seconds)

Participants concluded the fantasy by considering the following statement intended to elicit experientially descriptive data: "Begin to write a brief paragraph or two describing your experience in the fantasy. . ." (p.9).

Asking participants for written responses immediately after the guided fantasy experience ensures that what is figural for participants as they complete the fantasy does not dissipate through time or activity.

The constructed image questionnaire. Following completion of the initial paragraph, participants were asked to respond to specific statements as follows:

1. Describe how you interacted with the body of water.
2. Describe your experience of meeting and interacting with your old friend.

3. What did you do and how did you feel when you noticed the group of people at the top of the mountain?

Each statement oriented the participant to a specific context; (a) a body of water, (b) an old friend, (c) a group of people on a mountain top. Participants provided personally constructed descriptions of what they had experienced in each situation.

Research Procedure

Descriptions of the lived experience of interpersonal relating were collected through two methods: (a) Identifying remembered images of cognitive/affective experience in daily life and, (b) developing constructed images generated by the guided fantasy experience.

Participants in the study first completed the self-reflective questionnaire which took about 30 to 40 minutes to complete. After a two week interval, the guided fantasy was administered to the same participants. Written responses to fantasy situations were gathered immediately following the guided fantasy experience.

Treatment of the Data

Upon successful collection of the descriptive data, the first step was to compile the three sources of information into a

protocol for each participant. The method used to analyze each protocol was modelled after the methods of data condensation described by Colaizzi (1978), Koziey and Andersen (1989), and Giorgi (1975).

The present author spent time with each protocol in order to acquire a feeling for the material. Significant statements of inclusion behavior were extracted from the descriptions provided by each of the three instruments. "I floated on it" and "I went down on my hands and knees", are examples of statements portraying inclusive or exclusive behaviors, that were extracted from the questionnaire responses. Incomplete or interpretive statements were not included for analysis. For example, "I felt that they were all staring" was classified as an interpretive statement. Statements were taken verbatim to ensure original representation.

Themes and patterns gathered from the remembered images questionnaire were then related to the themes derived from the guided fantasy and constructed images questionnaire. Then, a "moving beyond the protocol statements" (Colaizzi, p. 59) ensued as I attributed meaning to what was said. In analyzing what the participant said, I used a thematic word or phrase to describe the involvement behavior. For example, "I'm pretty much a loner", suggested the phrase "avoids contact by

not reaching out". For the statement, "Usually talk more than I listen", the thematic phrase "tends to dominate" was used.

To lessen the possibility of misrepresentation, the protocol themes were then taken back to the original data to ensure that all of the significant original data were accounted for. That the themes are "grounded" in the data ensures that attributed meanings are valid. Also, in order to ensure validity, a co-researcher, in this case Dr. P. W. Koziey, studied the original data to identify inclusion behavior themes. After comparing the two researchers' findings, agreement upon a phenomenal patterning statement was reached.

The point of a second view is to ascertain whether the structure of the phenomenon as described by the original researcher is supportable. Giorgi (1971) explained that with this type of research, it is not so much whether another position with respect to the data could be adopted (this point is granted beforehand), but whether a reader, adopting the same viewpoint as articulated by the researcher, can also see what the researcher saw, whether or not he agrees with it (p.96).

To assist in understanding the phenomenon, the emergent themes from the protocols were organized into clusters. The resultant clusters of themes were then identified as patterns and expressed in a continuum style. Specific statements were utilized to describe fully the phenomenon of

inclusion-exclusion behavior. In order to remain true to participant construction of inclusion-exclusion behavior, the language of the participant was retained where possible. To reconsider the themes and patterns, an attitude reflecting "How was inclusion-exclusion accomplished?" was taken back to the original data. An exhaustive description of these interrogations is presented in Chapter IV.

The Issue of Bracketing

In phenomenological research, the researcher is the first and most important source of data. With the research question arising from the researcher's own lived experience, it becomes necessary for the researcher to engage in personal reflection to identify presuppositions. Self-reflection is an attempt to elucidate personal presuppositions which are implicit both in the inquiry and in the discussion of results. This self reflection is the process of bracketing.

The process of bracketing provides for personal assumptions to be clarified. These assumptions function as hypotheses which can provide direction toward understanding data. As Ridgeway (1988) explained, when presuppositions are not acknowledged, they function as personal beliefs which may inhibit understanding. Phenomenological researchers need to

allow a phenomenon to emerge on its own rather than force it into predetermined constructs.

Sincere personal questioning of my presuppositions of relating allows for openness in my encounters with the data. Relating has come to be defined to me as coming from one's position of strength. Personal strength accrues from the implied action being based on the individuals' position or belief. Beliefs dictate the actions for which I am recognized and valued. An action that is based on personal belief allows for the individual performing the action to be acknowledged. Relating is a phenomenon that clarifies personal beliefs, determining what I think and do, how I respond to people, how I think about myself and how I see the world in general.

In reflecting on my experiences of relating, I found that I have enjoyed the relating phenomenon from a variety of perspectives. As a student in high school, I did what was necessary to be considered part of the "in" crowd. I participated in sports and class activities in a competent manner, but was never really considered to be the best. Reconsidering my school days makes me realize that my network of friends featured no one best friend as my desire to be included led me to befriend a wide variety of individuals.

University life, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels featured a reversal of form. Here, as a means of survival,

I attached myself to my best friend. I spent as little time as possible in activities on campus; I dreaded activity classes. I spent my time away from scheduled classes alone.

From my work as a counsellor, I find it easy to provide clients with explanations for behaviors. I realize now, that a more effective method is to focus on the process of what is happening and how it is happening, and to ensure that those involved understand clearly their roles in creating the event. Through professional and personal encounters, I have come to conclude that self awareness is the key to improving personal relationships.

CHAPTER IV
DATA PRESENTATION

Introduction

Results of the questionnaires administered will be presented in three sections. Section 1, Phenomenal Descriptions, will deal with individual responses to each of the questions from the Constructed Image and Remembered Image questionnaires. Each question will be stated, and then followed by specific participant responses. The range of participant responses will be evident by the number of grouped responses. A general description of emergent inclusive/exclusive patterns of behavior is then provided.

Section 2, The Case for Isomorphism, will present data that illustrates similarity across situations. Seven cases are presented that demonstrate the structural similarity between constructed and remembered behavior descriptions.

Section 3, Categorization of the Data, will discuss the data as it is sorted into four categories. Each category describes both the direction and magnitude of inclusive/exclusive behaviors as described by this sample of young adolescents.

Throughout the results presentation, care has been taken to represent the participants responses as accurately as

possible. Response are quoted directly from the individual protocols, with attention given to proper spelling.

Phenomenal Descriptions

Constructed imagery questionnaire. Question 1. Describe how you interacted with the body of water.

Responses: "I enjoyed it at its edge and only disturbed it to fill a canteen".

"I stand and look down into the clear blue water".

"I walked up to it, sat down and stared at the reflections in the clear blue water".

"I walked slowly up to it, bent over and picked up some pebbles. I threw them in one at a time then left".

"I sat down beside it, picked up a handful of rocks and began throwing them into the water".

When asked to describe the how of their interaction with the body of water, only a few of the respondents tended not to 'connect' with the water physically. Common was the 'skipped stones, pebbles' activity from the water's edge. While enjoying the activity itself, no intent to get personally involved was mentioned. These respondents tended to skim only the surface in this encounter. Others tended either to stand or sit and watch the water. Noticing their own reflection, or using the water in filling a canteen allowed them to be there but not

directly encounter the water. Respondents tended to utilize the resource for its physical properties.

Responses: "I saw some stones leading out on the lake so I followed them".

"I was sailing in a boat".

"I took a boat and rowed up and down".

"I realized there was a canoe sitting there, I automatically went in it and had a fun time".

"Splashed water on the dry rocks to make them sparkle".

"I reached over and felt the water rushing through my hands".

"I splashed some water on my face".

"I sat on a rock and put my feet in the water"

"I took off my shoes and socks and began to walk along the shoreline".

"I was wearing shorts so I walked up to my knees in the water".

"Waded fairly deep into the water".

Continuing with the theme, respondents told of walking across on stones or paddling across in a boat or a canoe. Here the involvement was at the superficial level with an intermediary between them and the water. Involvement seemed to begin with splashing water on rocks to make them

sparkle and extended to washing the face, hands and the self. Cautious immersion of feet (after taking off shoes and socks) later led to wading in the water. The depth of the immersion ranged from feet to knees to waist. Throughout this range of activity was a note of caution. Although involved, respondents seemed to limit the extent of their involvement.

Responses: "I cupped my hands to get a taste of the cool mountain water".

"I went down on my hands and knees and drank some of it".

"I floated on it".

"I walked towards, then into the lake. Slowly I began to take my feet off the bottom and I was swimming".

"I saw if it was going to be safe. It seemed safe so I jumped in and swam".

"I jumped in and started to swim".

"I dived in and went swimming"

Those that described total involvement with the water did so in a manner that ranged from tentative to unreserved. Some incorporated the water by cupping their hands and taking a drink. Some drank directly from the body on their hands and knees. Some respondents floated on their backs in the water while others swam refreshingly only after checking it out to ensure safety. Many responses described behaviors

that engaged them with the water without taking time to be cautious or to gather information. Interaction with the water tended to be full-bodied and direct. The effects of the contact seemed pleasing.

Question 2. Describe your experience of meeting and interacting with your old friend.

Responses: "I see her and I walk up to her and start talking. We have a long long conversation and laugh like we did years ago".

"We walked up to each other, did our secret handshake and then talked".

"I went up and hugged her".

"I hadn't seen him in years so I hugged him and patted him on the back".

"We talked and decided we would go some place in the evening".

"It seemed like we had not seen each other for ages. We shook hands and started to talk about when we were young and childish. We then walked out of the jungle to a mountainous area".

Meeting and interacting with an old friend was described as an enjoyable experience that allowed for the re-establishment of friendship. Talk of old times and old friends led to some making plans to continue the conversation at a

later time; to invitations to join along with the walk. Some practiced a secret handshake while others initially hugged. It was obvious that renewed relations came with ease, without fear. The time apart provided reason to spend time together, to explore what had once been routine.

Responses: "Once I realized who it was...".

"I said 'Hi', she said 'Hi', we shook hands and walked away".

"I just shook his hand and walked on".

"I was not paying much attention to him, I gave a nod of recognition, that was all. I was having a stroll and would talk to him later".

"As we met it was as if he didn't know me any more and just kept walking on his way".

Although responses were skewed towards remembrance and involvement, some responses were cautious and hesitant. Those that seemed defensive needed cues in order to recognize others, while some described a remembrance of questionable previous friendship. Where the past relationship was uncertain, doubt about re-establishing relations was apparent. The intent was to present the self in a civil manner but not to extend the self to the other.

Question 3. <u>What did you do and how did you feel when you noticed the group of people at the top of the mountain.</u>

Responses: "I didn't mind. I just made my way to the top ignoring them and minding my own business".

"All I did was walk past and ignore them".

"I felt bad because I wanted to be up there first".

"I felt shocked when I saw the group of people at the top of the mountain".

"I felt scared because they had guns and knives and were chasing me".

"I stopped and hid because I didn't want anyone else to be there, I wanted to be all alone".

Imagined descriptions of what transpired at noticing a group of people ranged from a preference for being alone to falling off a cliff due to fright. Feelings of shock, surprise, and bitterness were expressed as 'being the first seemed imperative'. A typical behavior when shock and surprise was felt was to ignore the group. Respondents described themselves as 'walking right past them' or 'acting as if they were not there'. Fear was expressed and demonstrated, by staying out of sight and even being chased. In these instances, no mention of contacting the group or a person in the group was mentioned.

Participants who wanted to be alone to savour the experience described feelings of disappointment at seeing

others. Rather than a sharing atmosphere, a feeling of self-preservation is sensed in the responses.

Responses: "I still climbed to the top of the mountain but I was a little shy, said 'hi' and left".

"It was weird to find a group of people just waiting for you in the middle of a mountain range".

"I felt I should go because they would maybe tease or make fun of me and they would all stare but my friend Erin reassured me and grabbed my wrist as we walked to the top together".

Descriptions of superficial contact took the form of simple and quick greetings to the group calling out the invitation. Also, reassurance was needed to still feelings of unease and ill-confidence. Although 'being first' was still a priority for those that made contact with the group, feelings of disappointment and anger seemed to motivate moving toward rather than moving from, for this group. Extending the self to the group was 'work'. There seemed no ease of entry. Skeptical of a friendly welcome, respondents tended to react to the situation as though the others were infringing. This group tended not to join with the group but instead, make superficial contact, usually at the groups' invitation.

Responses: "I felt nervous about what they were going to do so I stayed back out of their way until they asked me to join them".

"I was shocked to see them and leery. I had to see more of who they were and what they acted like".

"At first I wasn't sure if I should keep climbing because I didn't know if the six people at the top were nice or whether they were bad. But then I saw them move so I kept going to the top".

"I kept to one side of the mountain and looked at what was below me. I wanted to interact with the people but didn't know what to say".

Uncertainty seemed to be a prevalent feeling for those respondents who were cautious in approaching the group. It was not unusual to read of respondents waiting 'to see what they were like' or watching to gather more information. Also, some asked themselves 'what the group was doing on top of a mountain or how was the other side to climb?'. Although nervousness was described, this group felt compelled to interact with the group.

Responses: "I didn't feel lonely anymore and I went over to them and talked to them".

"At first I was a bit nervous but then I decided I'd try to introduce myself. I found out that these people were very friendly and just as nervous as I was".

"I asked them why they were climbing the mountain and they said just for the experience and we all became friends. It felt good meeting new people".

"I joined in and had fun".

"Relieved that I wouldn't have to share my experience alone, and happy that I could meet people that had the same idea of climbing up the mountain".

Feelings of relief, gladness, joy and happiness seemed to prevail when respondents initiated contact. Without fear but with some nervousness, many respondents introduced themselves, became friends and in some cases left together. Sharing the experience was described as the reason for the happiness. No fear of approach was evident here, as interaction was on an equal basis. It seemed that a common trek lent itself to a basis for relationship forming.

Remembered imagery questionnaire. Question 1. Describe how you generally include yourself in activities with people and things.

Responses: "The only real time I do activities is if I'm doing it myself or I'm in a league so they don't have a choice".

"I sign up for some sports in the school and in the community".

Descriptions of how one generally includes himself or herself in activities spanned a range limited only by personal choice. Initially, respondents (a small group) described giving 'others' (presumed) no choice in allowing them to join through the utilization of community or school structures. These students used the security of a sure thing to include themselves. Left to their own devices, exclusion would no doubt result.

Responses: "If I see something that I like and I would like to join in, I would probably just sit and hope that they would ask. Because I think that they don't want me there if they don't ask me".

"I usually wait for someone else to say the first word or start the conversation".

Shyness is a factor that is continually mentioned. Typical behavior in these cases is to hang back on the fringe and wait to be approached. It appears that while there is a desire to join, the desire is not strong enough to overcome the shyness to carry them forward and encounter others.

Responses: "Kind of shy but usually join in by doing what they are doing or talking about what they're talking about".

"I usually include myself by going along with other people".

"I ask to be involved if they haven't asked me".

"I ask if I could join in with them".

A natural extension of waiting to be asked is to do what is being done. Simply going along with other people and assuming 'partnership' or in the course of preparing for activities, asking to be involved. Here, respondents seem to want to be a part of what is happening and will initiate interaction by assimilating themselves into the situation.

Responses: "I usually listen more than I talk, just to get the feel of the other people around me at first".

"Most of the time I will stay back and watch".

"I like to know some people in the activity or else I'll stay back".

"If there is someone I know I will go up and talk to them and hint about joining them. If I don't know anybody I would just leave and forget about it, or I would go and get a friend to come with me to join".

Caution is exercised by many of the young adolescents in this sample. Rather than assume membership, activities of the group and people in the group are watched. Senses are tuned in order to gather information to better judge what the group is like and ascertain a place for themselves. These respondents

tend to seek something familiar in the group or activity to which they can become attached. Once this familiarity is found, they ease into the situation with a greater sense of security.

Responses: "I am very curious and talk lots. I like to join in and be included with other people".

"I join in. I include myself if wanted and try and get people to do things. Get them interested and involved".

"I include myself in a lot of activities. I just go right up and join in and if they don't want me I'll just say okay".

"I feel very comfortable going up to people or groups of people. I'm not a very shy person. I don't like staying to myself, I feel better if I'm in a group or an activity".

It seems that just as those that join through leagues leave little to choice, those that dive right in create the same effect. These people leave others with little choice as they strongly demonstrate the desire to be involved. From a love of involvement to entering out of curiosity, the commonality is that they are a part of what is happening. Although there seems to be an awareness of others' needs, personal desires motivate the interaction.

Question 2a. Explain how you join in activities with old friends.

Responses: "With old friends I can relax, be myself. I talk with them knowing I can tell them everything they want to know".

"I just sit back and relax because they know who I am and what I'm like".

"I can trust my secrets with them and they are a stress release".

"I just walk in, I am relaxed and myself. Not self-conscious because I know I am accepted".

When asked to explain the how of joining in with old friends, the majority of responses indicated ease in creating a relaxed atmosphere. Respondents felt that what was done and what was said did not need to be justified. Freedom to express the self without fear of judgements led to an open style of relating.

Responses: "Probably the same way I approach others except I'll feel comfortable and talk a bit less but when I'm there a while, I'll go to my normal self".

"At first I am nervous and wonder if they have changed then I am usually comfortable after a while and can be myself".

From those that interpreted 'old friend' as someone they had not seen in a while, there seems to be a brief re-acquaintance period before relaxing and really being

comfortable. Caution is exercised until the unknown becomes familiar once again.

Question 2b. Explain how you join in activities with individuals.

Responses: "I am sort of shy and want to step back".

"I don't know what to do with people I don't know or trust".

"I have a hard time relating. Sometimes I act differently around people I don't know".

When asked how they join in activities with individuals, respondents were more inclined to be conservative in their approach. Some described a character change when they were around unknown people. Some stated not knowing what to do or say while others were too shy and simply stayed back. Here, fear of the unknown prevented them from taking the initiative to join in. Although sitting back was easier, there was desire to move forward, towards others.

Responses: "Usually I just wait for them to start the conversation and just hang out".

"Shy, don't feel they understand".

Individuals made some respondents self-conscious. Feeling that others would perhaps misinterpret their words or actions, the preferred action was to hang back and let others

begin. Shyness, cautiousness, and hesitancy characterized respondents.

Responses: "I don't until I know the person well enough to know what their personality is and if they are trouble makers".

"I sit and watch, then gradually join in".

"Watch what I say and how I act around and toward them".

Members of this group tend to listen and watch before commenting. Also, when speaking, they are conscious of not only what they say but how they say it. Judgements are feared because of insecurity with communication skills; the perception others make based on the skill of presentation is very much a factor in meeting others.

Responses: "I introduce myself and ask questions about things in common".

"I try to see if we have some of the same interests and if we like some of the same things".

"I talk to tell to get to know better and see what we have in common, then I relax".

Familiarity not only sparked joining in but acted as a bridge to inclusion. An obvious common interest made for ease of entry. Also, seeking to find commonalities gave a reason to make contact and to continue the association.

Responses: "Even though I don't know them very well, I would always like to make new friends so I just say 'Hi' and just say something about school".

"Just ask them how they are, what they're doing and talk about things that are happening".

Involvement for some is not a contest but rather something to be enjoyed, to be engaged in. No reason other than the good feeling that came from being involved precipitated interaction. A sense of sureness prevailed here as contact with others was spontaneous.

Question 2c. Explain how you join in activities with groups of people.

Responses: "Just walk away and leave them to play or whatever".

"I don't approach groups of people".

"I just don't play".

"I just stand around and listen or wait for them to respond to my presence. If they don't, I don't".

"Usually I just go along with what the group says and does and respond according to the way they act (eg. if people are trying to act cool that may be how I act)".

"Introduce myself and let them guide the conversation".

"I single out the people I do know and are friends with and then become more confident in meeting new people".

"I try to be a leader and get to know people".

"I have no problems around groups of people. I usually have the best time around them because I meet a lot of people being in a group".

Inclusion in groups elicited much the same patterns as described for individuals. Some simply walk away preferring not to be involved. Others stand back and let others include them at their will. Still others followed the rule of being available; listening, watching, perhaps doing what was being done, but mostly letting others guide the course of action. Familiarity was again an access point for a large number of respondents and necessary for interaction to occur. As well, others felt comfortable in a group of people and were relaxed in making a place for themselves.

Question 3. Describe how you casually approach others to talk casually.

Responses: "If it's my friend I will walk up and hit him lightly on the shoulder then talk and joke around. If it's someone I don't know I will probably not go up and talk to that person".

"I'll walk up to them and say 'hi, how's it going?', then I'll bring up a subject or that person will and we'll talk

about it until something else comes up. If I don't know them, I don't bother talking to them at all".

"If I know the people I can be myself and talk freely. If I am with people I don't know I will walk up and often listen more than I talk".

In describing their general approach to others for casual conversation, previously described themes of maintaining distance, giving up control, going with the flow, and observing and listening recur. Discrepancies in approach based on whether the other was deemed to be a friend or a stranger were clearly described. Friends promoted discussion and contact while strangers promoted unease and quietness. Interaction appeared to vary in terms of direction, not magnitude.

Question 4. Describe what you have noticed about how you involve yourself with friends.

Responses: "It depends on what I feel like doing. Sometimes I'm quiet and don't talk much, but other times I'm like a magpie".

"I have noticed that I need someone else to call me and ask me to do something but it depends on who it is. If it's someone I know I'll ask them but if I don't know them you can forget about it".

"I have noticed that I would preferably want someone to include me first. If I knew that person I would go up and just get involved".

"I don't like being ignored, or not talking. I do a lot of the talking".

"I noticed that when there are a lot of people I find only one or two people to talk to and I don't talk that much but when I am with one good friend I like to talk a lot".

"I like to be with other people but I don't like groups".

When asked to provide a summary of what they had noticed about how they involved themselves with friends, responses seemed to be an incorporation of answers to previous questions. These young adolescents provided specific descriptions of their inclusive or exclusive behavior which ranged from not getting involved to being very forward. Table 3 provides an accounting of the behavior patterns established from the sample. Clearly, passive inclusion behaviors dominated the style of interpersonal relating among the young adolescents in the present sample.

Table 3

Frequency of Interpersonal Relating Style

Behavior	Frequency	Percent
Active Exclusion	5	4.9
Passive Exclusion	15	14.6
Passive Inclusion	56	54.4
Active Inclusion	27	26.2
Total	103	100.0

Personal action patterns were described in a factual manner, while accounting for feelings of shyness, ignorance, tolerance or intolerance. There appeared no shadow of evaluation nor preference for immediate change in behavior as descriptions read with a 'this is me, take me or leave me' flavor.

The Case for Isomorphism

Conducting an imagery exercise allows for further exploration of patterns of involvement in the world. Descriptions that were constructed from the guided fantasy questionnaire can be related to the self-described behavior descriptions. Seven case examples are presented here to demonstrate the structural similarity between participants constructed and remembered behavior descriptions. A

phenomenal patterning statement was formed and included with each case.

Case 1:

Constructed description: "I was walking in the water at the edge. I splashed water on the dry rocks to make them sparkle and look clean".

Remembered description: "Curious, but I am usually quite quiet and don't talk very much. I'm not very involved".

Phenomenal pattern statement: superficial, avoids involvement.

Case 2:

Constructed description: "I walked towards, then into the lake. Slowly, I began to take my feet off the bottom and I was swimming in the lake. I swam to the other side then slowly I walked out of the lake".

Remembered description: "I am shy (usually) and join in slowly and with caution, even if I know them well, I am generally quiet and try to take everything in".

Phenomenal pattern statement: tentative involvement that may become full-bodied.

Case 3:

Constructed description: "First I had cupped my hands and had a drink. Then, I skipped stones in the river".

Remembered description: "I either ask if I can join in or I sit out and watch".

Phenomenal pattern statement: incorporation of available resources.

Case 4:

Constructed description: "I jumped in and splashed around. I also played with the fish".

Remembered description: "At first I walk up to them and introduce myself and try to get to know them. I notice that with friends, I talk a lot but usually not overly. I try to make all my friends laugh and make them feel happy and comfortable at the same time. I'm very lucky that I can make friends quickly".

Phenomenal pattern statement: complete immersion in other.

Case 5:

Constructed description: "When I saw the water I walked up to it, sat down and stared at the reflections in the clear blue water".

Remembered description: "I usually try to meet new people and experience different things in life. I don't just charge in, I feel more comfortable being invited in".

Phenomenal pattern statement: cautious and evaluative involvement.

Case 6:

Constructed description: "I floated on my back across it. I felt tired floating across".

Remembered description: "I talk to people and do things with them. I ask them what they want to do. I call them up. If I'm not wanted I will just walk around with them and not say anything and they don't even know I'm there".

Phenomenal pattern statement: unreserved interaction.

Case 7:

Constructed description: "I jumped in".

Remembered description: "Generally, if I want to do the activity I will go do it".

Phenomenal pattern statement: unrestrained immersion.

With the aim of the data analysis to explicate patterns of relating as they were lived by young adolescents, analysis of isomorphism serves to assist in the categorization of the data. Based on research supporting the principles of the self-fulfilling prophecy (Watzlawick, 1984), when imagery produced data is considered along with self-described behavior, a comprehensive picture of the individual is reflected. Verification of isomorphism supports Lankton's (1980) contention that images guide performance and in doing so provides validation of the consistency of reported behavior in participants.

Of the 103 protocols, 81 were judged to feature isomorphism. The remaining 22, although not devoid of structural similarity, reflected inconsistent behaviors between the fantasy and self-described situations. Many of these protocols could not be easily classified as they contained interpretive statements, as well as lists of loosely related thoughts, rather than simple descriptions.

When individuals are able to extrapolate from what they image directly to their behavior, they can begin to see how they do things. Although general awareness of action, for example, "I jump right in", seems to have little impact on behavior, the recognition of a basic pattern, offers the opportunity for further self exploration, enhancing the possibility for conscious choice.

Categorization of the Data

The data from the protocols were sorted into four categories, each expressing a distinctive theme: first, those who actively exclude themselves and others; second, those who passively exclude themselves yet are available for limited interaction; third, those who want to include themselves and do so in a passive manner; fourth, those who include themselves actively. While each category has variations within, movement was demonstrated as being either 'toward' (inclusion) or 'away'

(exclusion). The manner of movement was also demonstrable as being either in a directive way (active) or in a non-directive (passive) way.

Patterns of involvement were sorted into 4 general themes, with each general theme containing variations. To fully explain, specific statements illustrating each category and sub-category follows:

1. Active Exclusion:

(a) Avoids contact by not reaching out:

"I don't talk very much and I'm not very involved/I don't get involved that much/I'm pretty much a loner".

(b) Prefers to be alone:

"I usually like to be alone and I like to just be by myself".

2. Passive Exclusion:

(a) Listens and may asks questions:

"I don't lead a conversation but follow along with the other person/respond to his questions or statements/most of the time I don't say much at first, then I start to add to the conversation by asking questions".

(b) Is cautious and tentative in approach:

"I am shy and join in slowly and with caution, even if I know them well/I am usually nervous to act the way everyone else is. I do not like being talked about".

3. Passive Inclusion:

(a) Inclusion behavior is directed at others:

"I try to make all my friends laugh and make them feel happy and comfortable at the same time".

(b) While not accommodating, individuals are simply available:

"I wait to be invited usually/I don't involve myself that much, I wait for people to approach me not the other way around".

(c) Makes judgements first:

"cautiously and slowly so I am able to see how they are acting. This way I'll know if they seem to be people who are good natured and easy to get along with, I'll go up and get involved/I am usually quiet at first, looking around and judging these people/I enter objectively and analyze the situation but keep myself 'in the shadows' or away from the group until I decide how I want to enter the group".

(d) In including themselves, some individuals' shyness place them in a one-down position in interactions:

"Include myself in conversations but always let others do and say something/shy at first but later talk".

(e) Inclusion for some is based on:

i) Mood:

"It will depend on my mood, sometimes I will go to the person or I will stay back until they come to me/it depends on what I feel like doing/Sometimes I'm quiet and don't talk much, but other times I'm like a magpie".

ii) Friendship:

"I'm usually out in the distance, unless I'm with my close friends/I will not start a conversation with people I don't know/I tend to keep quiet unless I know the person well".

4. Active Inclusion:

(a) Generally these people like involvement:

"I like to start a conversation and start things/I'm not shy so I can talk to people and not be embarrassed even if I don't know them/I'm very forward and outgoing, I like to talk and be involved with what people are doing".

(b) Some individuals find that they dominate:

"Usually talk more than I listen/I tend to control a discussion, I like to dominate a conversation".

(c) Some find they over-indulge:

"I get people's attention by doing something stupid/I push myself too hard to be friends and be what they want me to be. I then lose my values and my goals/I usually just run in because if you're not a nerd they let you take over or say what you want".

Through the examination of interpersonal involvement, these young adolescents could be identified by whether they were passive or active, and whether they were exclusive or inclusive in their behavior.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

In order to reconsider the themes and patterns identified, the question, "How was inclusion or exclusion accomplished?", was taken back to the original data. Several general themes emerged regarding the structure of young adolescent interactional behavior.

The Data Reconsidered

Watching is participation. For some young adolescents in this study, being a spectator was synonymous with active participation. Recalling Coleman (1980), Argyle (1972), and Rawlins and Holl (1987), to validate the importance of belonging, it appeared that support roles satisfied some individuals' sense of belonging. Rather than being a front-line participant, a sense of membership accrued from fulfilling roles which allowed the role of athlete or student politician to be fulfilled.

Judgmental. The young adolescents in this study seemed very quick to state that judgements are made in forming relationships. "Is this person my type?" or "Are they good for me?" were the form of questions asked. Young adolescents judged others on a scale of personal differences. The

judgements made were on the basis of personal goodness of fit, rather than on the basis of public place or prominence.

Adolescent efforts to belong rest more on personal characteristics than on public values of achievement and academics. The prime motive for making judgements in the relating process is survival of the self. Young adolescents consider, to some degree, how their self might relate to the characteristics exemplified by a person or a group.

Fear of approach. It appeared that young adolescent style of relating is predominantly motivated by a desire to move towards others. Albeit with hesitation, caution, or doubt in some cases, the overwhelming need to belong was evident (Maslow, 1970). Where the approach taken prior to adolescence might have been performed haphazardly, without regard to the self or others, there now seemed to be a greater desire to know how to handle personal situations. In considering consequences to their selves when approaching others, young adolescents actually think about how to approach or include themselves. This ignorance of method is the fear of approach young adolescents overcome through meeting and dealing with others in new situations.

Expression of limitations. In the fantasy situations that these young adolescents were exposed to, they were able to communicate clearly what their limits were. For some , the

water was to be watched from the safety of the shoreline while others dived in without restraint. Clearly described, specific information revealed personal boundaries. When asked to describe procedures in relating, young adolescents were quite vague and unsure of just what they do. "It depends" was often quoted, as they qualified actions with a full description of the circumstances surrounding the situation. Only in situations where they felt secure did participants give a sense of testing the limits. It seemed that once young adolescents felt accepted by the other person or group, they were not confined to a particular perception of their self. In positions of relative safety, individuals were able to expand their limits.

Learn from exposure. As responses to the questionnaires were considered, new and different perspectives were being revealed by the research participants. Exposure to something considered important gained credence and value as participants considered their actions anew with each question. The young adolescents' answers seemed to reflect increased clarity and understanding as the relevance of individual patterns of behavior to friendship and relating became personal. Young adolescents in this study expressed a comprehension of what was being undertaken by detailing the effects of personal ways of behaving.

In reconsidering the data it became clear that these young adolescents understood that actions they performed were considered to be statements of their basic personality. Their matter of fact description of behavior stated, "This is how I handle myself". Adolescents were aware that they reflected their personality in their actions and this concerned them.

Practical Implications

The single most powerful psychological factor in early child development is the influence of parents and significant others. There can be little doubt that this influence weakens steadily over the years, eventually being eclipsed by the power of one's peers. Even in the primary years of schooling, the emergent influence of peers on the child's sense of acceptance and okayness is underway.

When one has no friends, what may be experienced is painful loneliness. Defined by Yalom (1980) as interpersonal isolation, this experience brings a strong desire to be with other people. When parts of ones' personality are kept private, a distance from others may be felt. Termed intrapersonal isolation by Yalom (1980), this refers to any type of fragmentation of the self. A friend not understanding one's communication can be left with feelings of emptiness and betrayal. Going beyond the interpersonal and intrapersonal

forms of isolation, Yalom (1980) described this as an existential isolation where a recognition of a separation between the individual and the world exists.

Parents, counsellors, and teachers need to be aware of the fear of loneliness that exists in young adolescents. These young adolescents communicated with honesty and openness, their desire to be acknowledged. Quite often simply acknowledging the person by name, by appearance, or by some noticed change, since the last encounter, adds immensely to the developing person. In a group context, identifying those with tendencies towards active or passive exclusion, allows the leader to design interventions that allow for controlled integration. An example might be to organize and manage a 'Santagram' or 'Caregram' service for the general school population. Here, individuals in the group are able to include themselves in the greater population under controlled circumstances. On the other hand, if active inclusion is the group's tendency, placing the person or people into subordinate or supportive roles limits their impact. Participating in this new role allows for follow-up discussion to center on the person's response to this different role, perhaps providing new perspective. Young adolescents need to know that they count, that they hold some value in the eyes of significant others.

Findings from this study can be used to ensure appropriate opportunities are provided.

In any helping practitioner's guide, an initial step is the identification and statement of the problem or symptom. In situations where client behavior perpetuates the problem, identifying the behavior grounds it in real life for the client. In studying the theme of involvement, entry behavior was observed directly from personal involvement in everyday experience. This focus provides, for young adolescents, an opportunity to view clearly the structural framework of their style of relationship formation. Professionals involved in educating and caring for youth need to first realize and then seize the opportunities provided by these insights. It is imperative that the behavior be separated from the person performing the behavior. The message must be that the person is valued but the behavior may require some alteration. With the utilization of these opportunities, young adolescents come to identify their structures of interpersonal relating, leading to understanding and personal responsibility.

Young adolescents become completely immersed in their selves. Actions that were once performed for sheer enjoyment take on new dimensions as personal consequences are attached to these actions. Personal concern grows, especially when results of actions are not what were intended. As more

attention comes to focus on the outcome of behavior rather than on the intent, what was or is being done takes on renewed significance. From the perspective of changing behavior, answering the question as posed by Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch (1974), is the most pragmatic approach: "What is being done here and now that serves to perpetuate the problem, and what can be done here and now to effect a change?" (p.86). Those in positions of caring for children and youth need to clearly identify what the child is doing rather than speculate on the motives of behavior. Instead of explaining them, being able to describe the what or how of personal relating problems contributes towards their solution.

Knowledge of the interpersonal relating styles of young adolescents brings with it the awareness of their intense fear of loneliness. At the same time, the experience of loneliness propels them towards others, providing them with experiences used to define their self. When young adolescents become aware of their actions, they become more responsible for those actions. Finally, when personal relating is discussed in terms of its present structure and consequences, something can be done about it without having to delve into the past to understand why it got to be that way.

Limitations of the Study

This study was of an exploratory nature, with the purpose being to arrive at a deeper understanding of the manner in which young adolescents include or exclude themselves in interpersonal situations. My efforts to investigate must be seen as tentative as well as incomplete because this type of research cannot exhaust the phenomenon under investigation, it can only present the researcher's explications.

Recalling Coleman's (1961) research on the dependency of school climate to student behavior, the results of this study are not intended to be representative of young adolescents in general. These results are considered to be school dependent.

Further Research

The possibilities for future research seem limitless. Adopting the methodology described in Chapter Three, two or three different researchers could perform individual analyses of the data from this study. It would be of interest to see results suggesting new patterns or confirming the findings of this study. Or, further studies using different samples and different methods may produce results that show similar patterns that extend beyond the participants in this study.

Taking the findings from this study and relating them to such educational concerns as achievement, deviant behavior, or participation in school activities may provide information that relates preferred involvement patterns to performance. Also, research that aims at relating age and gender to involvement patterns can lead to the creation of school programs which enhance personal growth.

Conclusion

This study used a phenomenologically based method to come to a better understanding of the nature of young adolescent interpersonal relating. Inspired by the overwhelming need of young adolescents to feel accepted and acknowledged by others, the intention was not to explain "why", but rather to increase and promote awareness of "what" is happening and "how" it is happening. The object of this study has been to reveal more deeply the phenomenon of young adolescent interpersonal relating.

Four major themes of personal involvement, each containing variations, emerged from the data: (1) active exclusion behaviors, featuring an avoidance of contact or a preference for solitude; (2) passive exclusion behaviors where young adolescents listen and question, or exercise more caution and are hesitant; (3) passive inclusion behaviors where

inclusive behavior featured accommodating behavior to make others comfortable; (4) active inclusion behaviors which feature interactions for the sheer joy of involvement, to dominate interactions, or to just let go and indulge.

Teachers, counsellors, and parents will increase their effectiveness in working with adolescents by understanding the manner in which young people relate to each other, and in particular, the patterns of how they include or exclude themselves in interpersonal situations. Identifying existing structures, habits, or patterns is the first step to understanding and change.

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Appendix 1

The Self-Reflective Interpersonal Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions as they relate to your everyday experiences.

1. Describe how you generally include yourself in activities with people and things.

2. Explain how you join in activities with:

   (a) old friends-

   (b) individuals-

   (c) groups of people-

3. Describe how you usually approach others to talk casually.

4. Describe what you notice about how you involve yourself with friends.

Appendix 2

The Constructed Image Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions regarding the images you had:

1. Describe how you interacted with the body of water.

2. Describe your experience of meeting and interacting with your old friend.

3. What did you do and how did you feel when you noticed the group of people at the top of the mountain?

Appendix 3

The Guided Imagery Experience

Sit comfortably, feet flat on the floor, in a position where breathing is easy; take a few deep, relaxing breaths, and allow your eyes to close as you clear your mind. . . (10 seconds).

Imagine yourself in the middle of nowhere. . . (10 seconds).

You may find yourself walking in a meadow and notice you are approaching a friendly body of water, a lake or a river. . . (5 seconds).

You somehow get involved with the water. . . (30 seconds).

You leave the water and continue walking through the meadow. . . (10 seconds).

In the near distance you notice an old friend approaching on the path. . . (5 seconds).

You somehow interact with this person. . . (30 seconds).

Continuing on your way, you soon begin a pleasurable climb up a mountain. . . (10 seconds).

As you approach the top, you see a group of people who have climbed up the other side. . . (10 seconds).

Notice how you respond in this situation. . . (30 seconds).

Slowly, and in your own time, come back to this room. . . (5 seconds).

You can open your eyes and feel alert, refreshed, and relaxed. . . (30 seconds).

Participants conclude the guided fantasy by considering the following statement: Begin to write a brief paragraph or two describing your experience in the fantasy.